

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Thursday, March 23, 2000

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PEASE).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 23, 2000.

I hereby appoint the Honorable EDWARD A. PEASE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We are grateful, O merciful God, that You are with us wherever we are and whatever we do. We know that Your spirit gives us forgiveness for the ways of our past, direction for the path ahead, and the comforting assurance that we are never alone.

We gain strength from the words of the Psalmist:

“Be still, and know that I am God,
I am exalted among the nations,
I am exalted in the Earth.
The Lord of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our refuge.”

May Your good word, O God, be with all Your people, and give them the peace and confidence that You alone can give. In Your name we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further pro-

ceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HUTCHINSON led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 5. An act to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the earnings test for individuals who have attained retirement age.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain ten 1-minute speeches per side.

PASS THE COLOMBIAN AID PACKAGE

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, each week that we delay the passage of the Colombia aid package costs America the lives of 1,000 of its children. That means every day we sit here and do nothing about the drug trade from Colombia, 143 of our young people will die from drug-related causes. In the time it takes us to debate and vote on the aid package, 12 children will succumb to drug addiction.

In 1998, 5 million young people in this country required treatment for drug addiction, and nearly 600,000 required an emergency room visit. In the United States, there are 1.6 million drug-related arrests annually, and over half of our prison population has committed drug related crimes. Even more disturbing, while the average age of marijuana users is increasing, heroin abusers are getting younger.

Seventy-five percent of all the heroin entering this country comes from Colombia. Delaying this aid package will only bring in more.

Mr. Speaker, we have worked hard to stop the genocide in other countries. We now have the duty to stop the senseless slaughter of a generation of young Americans. If we love our children as much as we claim, then we must pass the Colombia aid package, and soon.

PACT: PARENTS OF ABDUCTED CHILDREN TOGETHER

(Mr. LAMPSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to talk about Lady Catherine Meyer, wife of the British Ambassador to the United States and mother of Constantin and Alexander, and the organization she has formed called PACT, Parents of Abducted Children Together.

Constantin and Alexander left for a summer holiday with their father in Germany in 1994, and their father has kept them in Germany ever since. In the last 6 years, Lady Meyer has only seen her sons for a total of about 24 hours. Lady Meyer formed PACT to help American parents gain at least basic access rights to their children.

Today I will join my colleague, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), in introducing a concurrent resolution urging signatories to uphold the Hague Convention on the civil aspects of international child abduction. This resolution was introduced today with over 90 original cosponsors, a powerful statement on the importance of this issue. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) and I may be the legs and the feet to move this legislation through the House, but Lady Meyer is truly its heart and soul.

Mr. Speaker, children should be a nonpartisan issue, and I urge the House to pass this resolution and bring our children home.

UPHOLDING THE CONSTITUTION

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the United States Supreme Court ruled that the President had illegally exceeded the power granted to

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.